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Like every other evil that infests society, vaccination has its pecuniary incentives. Every smallpox scare in our large cities changes upwards of \$100,000 from the citizens' pockets to those of the physicians, which, it is natural to suppose, inclines them to indorse "the popular whim," and makes it so difficult to get an unbiased record of the disastrous consequences of vaccination. How often has the writer heard physicians say, "I do not believe in Jenner's system of vaccination, but as long as people do, and want to be vaccinated, I shall gratify them" !

We believe those quoted represent so large a class that, were physicians required to perform the service gratuitously, the system would not be continued a decade. To compel old and young, the strong and the weak, the healthy and those enfeebled by disease, to submit to vaccination, under existing circumstances, is certainly a dangerous expedient, not warranted by reason or our knowledge of its results.

WILLIAM B. HIDDEN, M. D.

IS COUNTRY LIFE LONELY?

It is often solitary, retired, to a certain degree ; but does a secluded life in the country necessarily breed a feeling of lonesomeness, irksome discontent, and a homesickness for the city ? This is a question that must interest any who contemplate a change from city to country. One will say the answer depends on the person who makes that change, and the answer has much truth. Another will say that it depends on the location of the country home, and that, too, has an important bearing. A house situated in a low, narrow valley, with no other habitation in sight, surrounded by woods and swamps, with scarce a lovely object in view, would indeed be lonely. It ought to be lonely, and it ought to breed such discontent as to drive the owner to seek a more cheerful location. I will add to these two important answers this third one : That one's lonesomeness in the country depends largely upon one's will, one's attitude toward the country. If you begin country life feeling that you are a foreigner to it, and never intend to be naturalized, then you doom yourself to dislike it. Nature will never adopt you into her larger liberties unless you will be adopted, and the shy denizens of bush and brake will never greet you as a fellow-citizen. But if you drop this alien spirit and resolve to conquer the country life by openly surrendering to its charms, then you will win a gratifying success.

A young couple hired a pretty farm cottage near the writer last year. They were people of the sanguine sort. They took a three-years lease of it, with the intent of buying. The man was not without conceit. He thought he knew all about the country, all about farming. He asked no advice and took none. He hired a man at high wages to run the farm. The house was newly painted and the rooms were decorated, so as to resemble a gaudy city apartment-house. The man had to be in the city long hours every day but Sunday. He gave orders to his farmer, and the farmer tried his best to carry them out. The newcomer's ideas of farming were fearfully and wonderfully made. Of course the young husband was a loving spouse, and the pair had no end of pretty little names that they called each other before the country folk. Otherwise they would never have stayed the summer through. But long before autumn the young amateur farmer had quarreled with his hired man, and both had to consult lawyers. Another

fine quarrel began with the landlord. The young wife—she was very young with a young child—got unutterably homesick. Early in the fall they compromised the lease, sacrificed their new tools and implements, abandoned fruits and crops and the glorious air and tinted leaves of autumn, and fled back to a “nice little flat in the city.”

Did they like the country? No, if one may judge from their reports in the city! “It was the most lonesome place, and everything was so disagreeable!” Did they know how to enjoy the country? That is the more pertinent question. Eyes had they, but they saw not. They never were seen to walk through woods or fields. They never called on a neighbor. They were so “lonesome” that they stayed in that little, newly decorated room as if it had been their prison, or indeed a flat on a twelfth floor. They cultivated no plant or flower with their own hands, nor personally cared for any animals, pets or poultry. They did go driving in a stiff, sedate fashion, with a boy driver. Tennis, rowing, fishing, swimming, croquet, sketching, botanizing, baseball, cricket, lawn parties? No, they were not for them! They were too “lonesome.” Straw-rides by the light of the moon? The idea would have given them a shock.

Of course these people deserved their fate. But there are many sensible, cultivated, open-air sort of people who will get lonesome and homesick on the average country farm, for instance. It is true. Let us confess, we have been lonely ourselves. But let us not forget that it may be a good thing to be lonely sometimes. To paraphrase an old proverb, in loneliness there is strength. The lone tree is the broad tree, rugged, storm-defiant. “’Tis a good thing sometimes to be alone,” wrote a wise poet. There are times when the spirit in man urges to seclusion. When a man is lonely, the eternal Verities speak to him, as they may not speak in a crowd.

A man need not be unhappy because he is solitary. Ask the spirit of Robinson Crusoe—unreal creation that outlives realities—if he did not more greatly enjoy his life on the desert island than any experiences in the haunts of civilized man. Every little farm, or country cottage, or artist's box in the woods, may be a Crusoe's island to any one with the adventurous, appreciative spirit of Defoe's hero. We follow “Leatherstocking” through the forest, and are charmed with his intimacy with nature, a reverent familiarity that leads him, step by step, “through nature up to nature's God.” Yet any one may be educated by the forest if he goes there, as to another university, intending to learn. We are not to imitate “Hawkeye,” nor imitate anything, but to listen, and to welcome the awful loneliness of the woods until we get a message from it, remembering that often the lonely lives have been the great lives, and that the true lover speaks only when there is no third party present. There is a plant in the hotbed or greenhouse. It is crowded, growing tall, indeed, but spindling. If you leave it there it may possibly blossom, but will bear little if any fruit. Transplant it to a free, broad space in the open air; ah, it wilts! It is “lonely.” The sun strikes it down, and storms beat it into the dust. But care for it, watch it, and soon it begins a broad, sturdy growth, blossoms, fruits, and becomes what it never would have been in the hotbed.

C. H. CRANDALL,